



The South India CHURCHMAN

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Authentic Evangelism

The World Council of Churches Conference on World Mission and Evangelism was held in Melbourne, Australia, from 12th to 24th May 1980. More than five hundred delegates drawn from about hundred nations participated in this momentous conference in an endeavour to gain, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, new insights for mission and evangelism in the Eighties. Focussing their attention on the prayer Jesus taught us: 'Your Kingdom Come', the participants prayed, studied and discussed together to discover 'genuine and authentic evangelism' for our age and for our generation.

The delegates went to the Conference with high hopes and great expectations. These may be summed up in the words of Emilio Castro, Director of the W.C.C.'s Commission of World Mission and Evangelism, who said: 'My first hope is to hold a conference supported by prayer and enlightened by the vision of the Kingdom....I hope also that this conference will help me and many others to discover afresh who is this King whom we worship.....I hope that the conference will oblige all participants, and through them the Churches, to recognise the very personal nature of participation in the Kingdom.....I hope that out of the conviction that the growing gap between the rich and the poor is a blasphemy before God, the Conference will draw conclusions such as: The Church of the poor can challenge the whole of Christianity to life-styles that will affirm our belonging to the Kingdom.....How do we proclaim God's Kingdom in relation to the hopes of people of other faiths? I hope that Melbourne will dare to face this question and will stimulate Christians to experiment with new ways of witnessing to the Kingdom of God and the lordship of Christ.'

True to these expectations, the Conference grappled with the task of understanding the nature and meaning of mission and evangelism in the context of the various political, social, economic and cultural forces at work in the contemporary world. A perusal of the various reports and documents put out by the Conference reveals that the different ingredients of the Conference Programme were dominated by this concern to put the Gospel of the Kingdom of God in the contemporary world context. This was the central theme of the daily worship services, Bible studies, the five major plenary addresses, panel presentations and papers read at the section meetings. The same concern was reflected in the four sections into which this conference was divided to study in depth the various aspects of the main theme, namely, 'Good news for the Poor', 'The Kingdom of God and Human Struggles', 'The Church witnesses to the Kingdom' and 'The Crucified Christ Challenges Human Power'.

The Conference did well to emphasize that in a World threatened with nuclear annihilation and ridden with all sorts of oppressions inflicted by the powerful upon the powerless, the Churches should 'be in solidarity with the struggles of the poor', 'join the struggle against the powers of exploitation and im-



poverishment', 'establish a new relationship with the poor inside the Churches', and 'pray and work for the Kingdom of God'. As it is declared in the Report on 'The Kingdom of God and Human Struggles': 'The Churches have a prophetic task to discern, in these struggles and in the ambiguities which they represent, where the forces of the Kingdom are at work and when the countersigns of the Kingdom are being established. The Church must awaken to exercise anew its prophetic role and itself ask for the gift of the Holy Spirit to establish effective signals of the Kingdom of God'.

The Conference has also tried to spell out the meaning of evangelism and its authenticity in the contemporary world context. While recognising the centrality of evangelism, proclamation of the Gospel, to the life and work of the church, the Conference has issued a call to the Churches to review the context and mode of evangelism 'in our day in the light of the advance of biblical knowledge, of our own mistakes of the past, and the emergence of new forces and problems in the present'. Dwelling upon evangelism, the relevant report says:

'Genuine evangelism therefore is the proclamation of Jesus as Saviour and Lord who gave his life for others and who wants us to do likewise, setting us free by declaring God's forgiveness. Evangelism is true and credible only when it is both word and deed; proclamation and witness'.

The Conference has rightly highlighted the unity and integrity of social action and evangelism by proclaiming:

'In a world of large-scale robbery and genocide, Christian evangelism can be honest and authentic only if it stands clearly against these injustices which are diametrically opposed to the Kingdom of God and looks for response in an act of faith which issues in commitment.....The neighbour today also is fallen among robbers as in the Gospel parable. Woe unto the evangelizer who proclaims the word but passes by this neighbour like the priest and the levite in Jesus' parable.

'The unity and integrity of social action and evangelism has been suggested to us by the proposition that to issue a political challenge to the oppressor in the name of Christ may be the only authentic way of putting to him what it means to make Jesus Christ the Commanding reality in his life. We thus affirm and seek to obey the mandate to bear witness among all nations to Jesus and him crucified. We reject as heretical any proclamation of disincarnate Christ, a caricatured Jesus, who is presented as not being intimately concerned with human life and relationships'.

Your Kingdom Come

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

We, more than five hundred Christians from many of the world's nations, have gathered in Melbourne, Australia, May 12-24, 1980, in the World Council of Churches' Conference on World Mission and Evangelism. In the name of Jesus Christ we have come. Our attention focussed on the prayer Jesus taught us: 'Your kingdom come.' This prayer disturbs us and comforts us; yet by it we are united.

We meet under the clouds of nuclear threat and annihilation. Our world is deeply wounded by the oppressions inflicted by the powerful upon the powerless. These oppressions are found in our economic, political, racial, sexual and religious life. Our world, so proud of human achievements, is full of people suffering from hunger, poverty and injustice. People are wasted.

Have they no knowledge, all the evildoers
who eat up my people as they eat bread?

(Psalm 15: 4)

The poor and the hungry cry to God. Our prayer 'Your kingdom come' will not reach the presence of God unless we pray in solidarity with the cry of millions who are living in poverty and injustice. Peoples suffer the pain of silent torment; their faces reveal their suffering. The church cannot live distant from these faces because she sees the face of Jesus in them (Matthew 25).

In such a world the announcement of the kingdom of God comes to all. It comes to the poor and in them generates the power to affirm their human dignity, liberation and hope. To the oppressor it comes as judgment, challenge and a call for repentance. To the insensitive it comes as a call to awareness of responsibility.

Jesus Christ is the centre of all peoples and all things. Yet, he was laid in a manger 'because there was no place for him in the inn' (Luke 2: 7). He is the centre who is always in motion towards the periphery, the marginal. He affirms his lordship by giving it up. In this movement towards the periphery he establishes his healing authority.

People who suffer injustice are on the periphery of national and community life. Multitudes are economically and politically oppressed. Often these are the people who have not heard of the gospel of Jesus Christ. But Jesus Christ comes to them. He exercises his healing authority on the periphery. We, participants in this Conference on World Mission and Evangelism, are challenged by the suffering of the poor. We pray that they may hear and that all of us may be worthy proclaimers of the gospel by word and life. We stand under the judgment and the hope of Jesus Christ. The

prayer 'Your kingdom come' brings us closer to Jesus Christ in today's world. We invite you to join us in commitment to the Lord for the coming of whose kingdom we pray.

Your Kingdom come, O Lord.

(Message from the Conference on
World Mission and Evangelism
of the WCC at Melbourne,
Australia, from 12th to 24th May 1980)

Southern Asia Bishops' Retreat

Bishops of one region rarely have the opportunity to meet their brother bishops from other areas in person. As is often the case, the little they know of each other is by reading their names in Church lectionaries or magazines and once in a while through a letter they have had to write on behalf of some one in need.

The Southern Asia Bishops' Retreat cum Conference was held in Delhi at the Parish Hall of the Cathedral Church of the Redemption from 26th February to 2nd March. It was one of those rare occasions when 21 Bishops from the C.S.I., C.N.I., the Mar Thoma Church and the Church of Bangladesh could come together for mutual edification and strengthening. In an atmosphere of deep fellowship they were able to share their common concerns as Bishops for greater involvement in the missionary task facing them in their own dioceses.

The Retreat cum Conference was planned at the initiative of the Moderators of the C.N.I. and the C.S.I. The chief organiser was the Rt. Rev. Jack Dargatzis, Assistant Bishop of Sydney in the Province of Australia. He was assisted by a team of most able leaders. Archbishop Williams of Wales gave a series of addresses to the assembled Bishops on 'Our Ministry'. He said it was the task of the whole Church to bring men the knowledge of that full humanity that Christ intended all men to have—to make them free from self-concern and able to give themselves to the service of all men. The Bishop's part is to constantly be the initiator and disturber challenging his presbyters and people to carry out this mission.

The remarkable and scholarly Bible Studies were led by Dr. Donald English—ex-President of the British Conference of the Methodist Church. He talked about our mission with many examples and analogies. He spoke of Christ as the 'heart-beat of creation' and 'a clue to life'. Our mission is to make Christ known in all aspects of human life. He said, 'Even my footstep was different after I knew Christ'.

(Continued on p. 11)

Melbourne Memorabilia

Over 500 delegates from 83 countries who were in Melbourne from 12th to 24th May, 1980 for the conference, 'Your Kingdom Come' were reminded by Philip Potter of the basic conviction which Churches had when they formed the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam in 1948: 'The whole Church with the whole Gospel to the whole person in the whole world'. Declaring in his inaugural address, 'When we are motivated by God's kingly rule, then we are bound, like the Old Testament prophets, to see the world as a whole', he affirmed 'the need for relating the text of God's kingdom to the total context of our world, and not only as part of it'. He said that 'mission is cosmic in its scope, concerned with bringing the whole creation and the whole of humanity within the sphere of God's purpose of good' and that the 'message must be articulated and communicated in the context of the culture of people, their whole way of thinking, believing and acting'.

Perspective of the Poor

As the majority of the delegates were from Churches in the non-Western world, it was but natural that the poor and the oppressed of the world formed the major foci of the conference. Emilio Castro, the Director of the Commission of World Mission and Evangelism set the stage by reminding the delegates that, generally speaking, history has been written by winners. The history of Christian thought has not escaped this rule; it has been written by those who have been winners of wars and are winners in the economic structures of the world. 'We hope that new aspects of the Gospel of Jesus Christ will appear as we read his Word and meditate on the Kingdom from the experience and perspective of the poor of the earth.' His question, 'How can the Church announce the good news if the very same Church appears historically to have been the ally of the bearer of bad news?' was real to Churches working among the poor.

Professor Ernst Kasemann of Tübingen, continued this trend in his penetrating Biblical presentation affirming that 'Jesus was not a revolutionary. Nevertheless, his appearance on the scene has revolutionary consequences which were inescapable.... To most Church members it seems heresy to assert that the sovereignty of God and the kingdom of Christ are not intended merely to keep citizens obedient to traditional laws and systems, submissive to the authorities, and that Christianity wherever it is found must be an active leaven and the voice of the oppressed, an alert and critical conscience against avarice, against the pillage of the earth, the violation of its creatures, the underwritings of the present state of things.' Calling for an openness to all fellow-human beings he said that 'Christians cannot look in neutrality in silence at the appalling inhumanity which is turning the earth into an inferno. The gospel is watered down wherever body and soul are parted, salvation distinguished from earthly help for the suffering, where freedom is reserved for heaven hereafter, and so the good news falsified into an opium for the exploited, the tortured and the oppressed.'

Shared Experiences

The delegates met nine times in twenty-five small groups for one and a half hours each for intensive Bible study. They were also divided into four sections which in turn were divided into many sub-sections. These provided unique opportunities to share personal experiences from particular situations. The vivid description of a Korean pastor who had been in prison five times during the last seven years, the agony of an African bishop in praying 'your kingdom come' with members of twenty-four families whose children he had confirmed on his previous visit and more than half of whom were in prison and not brought to open court. The tears of a priest trying to pass on the message of hope on his pastoral visits to the wives and mothers whose husbands and children were taken from their homes by police to unknown places. The description by Baptist and Roman Catholic theological students of their participation along with the Sandinista men in the overthrow of the 43 year old oppressive regime of the Somoza family in Nicaragua, the dilemma of an African girl who had seen her father only once every year for the last two decades or so because of the laws of the state, wondering whether to join a group and fight the system or not and if she joined whether her Church or any group would provide a Sacramental sustenance, the description of a life of degradation unworthy of even animals in a country which prides itself on being founded on Christian principles—these examples will be remembered for a long time by those who heard them. Deeply held dogmas and abstract theologies were shaken as delegates heard the personal testimonies of deprivation, humiliation and the indignities. To some the daily worship and intercession in the conference provided opportunities to cry out to the Lord out of the depth of their experiences.

Section Reports

Besides the five major plenary addresses, panel presentations and papers were read at the section meetings. The major work of the conference was undertaken in the following four sections:

(a) *Good News to the Poor*: Sharing the common conviction that 'God intends for all humanity to have both enough of material and cultural riches (the necessities of life) and to have both a personal and social state of well being (fullness of life)' the conference identified poverty generally as (i) poverty in the necessities of life, (ii) poverty amid material wealth and (iii) voluntary poverty.

In many parts of the world the churches were part of the establishment, assisting in the maintenance of a status quo that exploited the natural wealth and the poor of their own country. Whereas Jesus identified with the poor in his life and ministry, the churches were alienated by their middle class values. The churches must be consistent in what they say, what they do and what they are. Jesus' option for the poor should become an example and challenge for everyone.

The Churches were called to (a) be in solidarity with the poor. The poor are to be supported in their efforts to change their own situation. Evangelising and witnessing communities of the poor are to be helped so as to discover and live out expressions of faith among the matter of the poor and oppressed. In other words the Churches were called to become the Churches of the poor which in fact would mean a radical change in the institutional life of the missionary movement. (b) join the struggle against the powers of exploitation and impoverishment. Transnational corporations, Governments, even the churches and their missionary organisations have been involved in exploitation and impoverishment and they would not voluntarily release their grip on the poor. Therefore there is the necessity to enter actively in the struggle. (c) establish a new relationship with the poor inside the Churches. The structures of mission and mission life need to be changed to patterns of servanthood and partnership. The life-styles of clergy and the lay leaders need to be changed, so that they come closer to the poor. (d) pray and work for the kingdom of God, which would concentrate the Church's attention on what God was trying to give to the entire humanity.

(b) *Human Struggles ; the Churches and the kingdom of God* : The task of the Churches amidst the various ongoing struggles is 'to return to and renew the hope they have in Jesus Christ so as to be able to join forces with all those who hope instead of succumbing to despair and passivity.'

A Church that does not respond to changes in a changing world is an anomaly. The Church is to 'discuss in each place and context the various tools—outside and inside the Churches—that God might use for his purpose'. In witnessing to the kingdom of God in words and deeds 'the Churches must dare to be present at the bleeding points of humanity and thus near those who suffer evil, even taking the risk of being counted among the wicked'. Without losing sight of the ultimate hope of the kingdom of God or giving up their critical attitude the Churches must dare to be present in the midst of human struggles for penultimate solutions and welcome all signs of hopeful development. They should be open to self-criticism as well as enter into dialogue with other religions and ideologies which participate in the struggles. Wherever a religion or its revival enhances human dignity, human rights and social justice for all people, and brings in liberation and peace for everybody, there God may be seen at work.

Evangelism is part of the local mission of the Church in the social, economic and political life of human societies. Their participation in struggles for human rights is in itself a central element in the total mission for the proclamation of the crucified and risen Christ.

In many situations today, renewed life-styles will be the most authentic and unambiguous way to proclaim and live out the gospel.

The Churches were called 'to urge all those involved to look upon war preparations and the infringement of human rights in the name of national security as countersigns to the kingdom of God'. A 'cessation of the world-wide research, testing and production of nuclear weapons' was called for and the Churches were encouraged to support 'all efforts designed to place an immediate moratorium on the development, use and export of nuclear power'.

Reiterating what the last conference in Bangkok had said, the section impressed upon 'our Churches an

even more urgent need to become involved fully in the ongoing human struggles, and become even more aware of the fact that the Gospel about the coming of the kingdom of God is related to the struggles of this world.'

(c) *The Church witnesses to the Kingdom* : The Church is to a community, a living and a sharing fellowship and the sign of the kingdom would be evident when it is truly open to the poor, the despised and those rejected by our modern societies. The Church is to reflect both the universality of the Gospel and its local expression.

Proclamation is the responsibility of every member and of the Church as a whole. The proclamation of the good news is the announcement that the kingdom of God is at hand, a challenge to repent and an invitation to believe. Proclamation is a continual necessity and all people, believers and unbelievers, are challenged to hear and respond since conversion is never finished. On the pilgrimage of a Christian community proclamation is linked to a specific situation and a specific moment in history. It is God's good news in contrast to the bad news of that specific situation. Conversion involves a turning *from* and a turning *to* and always implies a transfer of loyalty. It leads to a new relationship both with God and with others and become part of the community of believers. It is individual and societal, vertical and horizontal, faith and deeds.

In the institutional churches, under the influence of liturgical and sacramental renewal, charismatic movements and parish weekend conferences, local congregations are attempting to realise the fullness of Christian fellowship. Small groups known as Base Christian communities have arisen among the poor and disenfranchised and committed to the struggle for their liberation express the common concerns for identity and dignity. In many countries these groups are a gift to God, offering renewal to the Church and hope to the poor. As an alternative to parish life many other experiments have been undertaken.

The need and the possibility for common witness among people of other religions and ideologies, especially in societies where these religions and ideologies constitute a majority was strongly emphasised.

The Church corporately and through the members are to be involved in common witness and action in the social and political situations. The credibility of the Churches would depend on their moral choices and political goals in society. Common witness is to be undertaken at the local and national level, the international level and at the interconfessional level.

(d) *The crucified Christ challenges human power* : The power struggles of the super powers take place directly or through intermediaries in many parts of the developing world. As a result many have suffered because of military occupation, political repression, ideological aggression and onslaught and exploitation from transnational companies with the help of local elites. The lives of millions of people are being wasted. The Church's complicity with the colonial power continues in some parts even today. Churches are called to repentance for acquiescence in such involvement in such shameful injustice.

The fundamental criterion for the use of power by the churches must be the good of the poor and the liberation from oppression. To stand aside is to

aligned with the oppressor. Taking sides may put to risk the institutional life of the Church. Siding with the downtrodden or marginalised people and being sensitive to their needs means sharing in their suffering.

The Churches have the potentialities to influence attitudes and values and to raise consciousness. However the tensions that are present in the community are also present in the Church. A profound wrestling in prayer and a dynamic spirituality is needed to meet the challenges of the powers that are reflected in these tensions.

The marks of the crucified Christ would determine the social actions of the Church and its members and such marks might be present in the suffering and martyrdom of Christians today. Christians today choose different ways to resist violence. The practice of non-violence is an inalienable part of the Christian obedience. There are also situations where Christians and their communities involved in counter violence to become free from the unbearable violence of the oppressors. The Churches could act in solidarity with such communities, though more study of this problem is recommended.

The use of power by the Churches and their leaders is to be an expression of selfless love and not for their self-preservation.

Evangelism is credible only when it is both word and deed. It is heretical to proclaim a disincarnate Christ, a caricatured Jesus, who is not vitally concerned with all aspects of life and relationships. Evangelism is honest and authentic only if it stands clearly against the many personal, national and racial injustices especially the people of other beliefs have been subjected to daily. The Churches must move from charitable work to tackling the causes and structures that continue to keep the people poor, oppressed and captive.

The Church of the poor could preach with integrity to the poor of the world. The pattern of mission in the 80's points increasingly to be *within* rather than *between* the zones of the Third World and the industrialised Western world.

The Churches and organisations which receive economic assistance were requested to adapt their orientations and life-styles to the poor whom they serve. The Churches were urged to support international bodies working for a new international economic order: United Nations, UNCTAD etc., and the challenge to participate in a global tax. The Churches were also challenged to implement better structures of co-operation in mission, promote ecumenical exchange of personnel and united witness at local, regional and national levels.

Concern and Identification

(a) *El Salvador and Latin America*: The conference expressed its deepest solidarity with the suffering and demands of the people of El Salvador and of all the Latin American people. It appealed to the President of USA to stop the support and military aid to military regimes and to respect the right of the people in Latin America to seek a new social order, that is more just and more human.

(b) *South Africa*: After hearing detailed reports of the apartheid in education leading towards injustice to black students, the conference requested the World Council of Churches in conjunction with National Councils of Churches to condemn the police violence

against students and to pledge their full support in an act of universal solidarity with the black people in their struggle for a just, participatory and sustainable society in South Africa.

A report of the national crisis resulting from the dispossession of land, deprivation of human rights and the appalling conditions of the black people in South Africa was received by the conference. The conference resolved to request the World Council of Churches in conjunction with National Councils of Churches to focus the attention of the universal Church, governments, and Christians throughout the world to expose the plight of South Africa's rural poor, to support their claim to a full share in the privileges of the country, to challenge the South African Churches with its missionary responsibility to minister to the poor and to channel aid to the victims of social injustice.

(c) *South Korea*: A letter was sent to the President of South Korea and to the National Council of Churches expressing its deep concern over the loss of lives and appealing for the lifting of martial law, liberalisation of stringent laws and restoration of democracy through a free election.

(d) *Australia*: The conference passed a sincere vote of thanks to the Churches in Australia and to the many members for their generous help and hospitality, and for the occasions provided to share in fellowship and worship with the congregation in the different States.

It called on the Commission of World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches to expose the plight and internationalise the problem of aborigines in Australia as a matter for concern and action by the universal Church. Supporting the claim of the aborigines to full personhood, the right to land and to a full power sharing in Australia, the conference urged the Australian Churches to action for justice.

(e) *Unnamed brothers and sisters*: Recognising that there are countries where foreign powers are intervening militarily and that there are governments which oppress, exploit, imprison and kill innocent people, the conference assured its many unnamed brothers and sisters in many unnamed countries that itself had not forgotten them. It identified strongly with their suffering for the kingdom of God. Knowing that many suffer under different regimes for their faith in Jesus Christ, the conference urged that freedom of conscience be respected as well as other human rights.

Notable Moments :

Though the delegates would have had varied experiences depending on the sections they opted for, yet there were some moments which would be remembered by them in a very special way. These were :

(i) Three delegates from Zimbabwe came on the stage holding their national flag. One of them read a message of thanksgiving to God, and to the WCC for its deep concern and support. The photographers had a field day, and the delegates were warmly applauded.

(ii) Dr. Tracy Jones of USA and Archbishop Makary of the Russian Orthodox Church came together and separately announced the meeting together of fifteen delegates from each of their countries. They reaffirmed their role as agents of reconciliation. In the life of the WCC during the last 20 years they have met at times of conferences to reflect and to discuss their

roles as peacemakers. It was a thrilling moment to see them embracing one another, and the Moderator of the meeting.

(iii) There was a delightfully varied presentation on Australia. Many in the hall were visibly moved by Mr. Joyce Clague's description of the plight of the Aborigines in Australia.

(iv) On Sunday, 18th May, 7000 worshippers at the Festival of Faith were spellbound at the stirring personal testimony and the challenge given by Dr. Philip Potter, the General Secretary of the WCC. The music was superb and greatly enjoyed by all.

(v) Who would forget the delegate who got up after the presentations of Dr. Potter and Dr. Castro to question as to why there was no 'naming of the name'? Or Dr. Castro's reply that the entire presentation was of that only, and if it was not so then they should study the Bible again! As a sequel to this, another delegate at another time stood up and asked for the 'names to be named' (in this context the names of transnational companies and the elites who exploit the people!)

(vi) The women had separate meetings, and presented a paper on 'The Vision of the Kingdom according to women'. The men were put on the spot, and of course some took up the cudgel, to solemnly affirm that the women in their churches were contented and well taken care of!

(vii) Over 300 delegates visited nearly 200 churches in different Australian states, during the weekend. They sampled the generous Australian hospitality, shared their experiences with congregations and gained much by way of new insights. It was a rare privilege to meet fellow Christians from a different country for study, fellowship and worship.

Looking to the Future :

Did Melbourne go beyond Bangkok? There were months of preparation and voluminous material was produced both before and during the conference. Without any exaggeration, several dozen topics connected with the various aspects of church life were touched upon. Obviously it would take considerable time to go through and digest all of it. Many of the issues of Mexico and Bangkok have been taken for granted. Although the poor were not physically present, their poverty and exploitation, and mission in that context were over-riding concerns. It was a natural outcome of the recent events and findings in the world. In that sense Melbourne was a vision reinforced, and a mandate reaffirmed.

One may be tempted to say that there was too much repetition. In one of the sections, when it was mentioned in a report that 'Bangkok said.....' a Thai delegate took the mike to say that his church had not said that! (Obviously he had not heard of the Bangkok conference and thus misunderstood.) It would be true to say that there are many thousands who are unaware of the reports of the last conference. Certainly most of the recommendations have also not been put into effect. In that context it is indeed worth repeating.

There was mention of religious colonialism and the alienation of the Church from the cultural inheritance of the land. Although there was a strong feeling that the Church should be liberated so as to be native to the soil, yet it would be an impossibility *as long as* western missionaries and funds keep pouring in. The Church will remain captive till they withdraw.

Unfortunately the Western Church cannot think mission except in terms of sending their funds and personnel to churches particularly in the developing countries. Though 'churches in partnership' has been talked about, the voluntary missionary societies not only refuse to die, but continue to expand. Added to this, new sects, societies and churches almost solely concerned with orally 'naming the name' and spreading their tentacles all over the countries of the developing world. The Church in these places seem to be eternally imprisoned by the West.

Moratorium was not even whispered. Yet, it is surely almost the only way out of the impasse. There again without any planned moratorium example, we have the experiences of Burma and China. After some years when the sound of the door being opened is heard there is more desire to rush in as benevolent patrons rather than to wait, listen, evaluate and learn about the possible new structures. As long as the 'business as usual' principle is maintained, there will be no change.

There is tremendous wastage and duplication largely due to the denominational link-ups in mission, and it is amazing that with all this we dare to talk about the exploitation of the poor! The Churches in the developing world are closer to their denominational godfathers in the West than with their fellow Christian citizens or their immediate neighbours. The statement to the effect that 'the witnessing of the poor church to the world would be authentic' is to be warmly welcomed. Would the Western churches and mission agencies *their charity* really allow this to happen?

Conclusion :

The Conference drafted a letter of invitation to all members of Churches and there is no better way to conclude than by quoting extracts from it.

'Our world is deeply wounded by the oppressions of our economic, political, racial, sexual and religious life. Our world, so proud of human achievements, is full of people suffering from hunger, poverty and injustice. People are wasted.

In such a world the announcement of the kingdom of God comes to all. It Comes to the poor and in this it generates the power to affirm their human dignity, liberation and hope. To the oppressor it comes as judgment, challenge and a call for repentance. To the insensitive it comes as a call to awareness of responsibility. The Church itself has often failed its Lord by hindering the coming of his kingdom. We admit our sin and our need for repentance, forgiveness and cleansing.

People who suffer injustice are on the periphery of national and community life. Multitudes are economically and politically oppressed. Often these are people who have not heard of the gospel of Jesus Christ. But Jesus Christ comes to them. He exercises his healing authority on the periphery. We, participating in the conference on world mission and evangelism, are challenged by the suffering of the poor. We pray that they may hear and that all of us may be worthy claimers of the gospel by word and life. We stand under the judgment and the hope of Jesus Christ. Our prayer, 'your kingdom come' brings us closer to Jesus Christ in today's world. We invite you to join us in our commitment to the Lord for the coming of his kingdom we pray.'

ALEXANDER D. ...

[JULY 198...

'YOUR KINGDOM COME'—A Prayer from Melbourne which Unites

by LEON HOWELL*

Melbourne (EPS)—'In a world full of people suffering from hunger, poverty and injustice, in a time of nuclear threat, the announcement of the kingdom of God comes to all. It comes to the poor and in them generates the power to affirm their human dignity, liberation and hope. To oppressor it comes as judgment, challenge and a call for repentance . . . We stand under the judgment and the hope of Jesus Christ. The prayer "Your Kingdom come" brings us closer to Jesus Christ in today's world. We invite you to join us in commitment to the Lord for the coming of whose kingdom we pray.'

With this message to the churches some 500 Christians from more than 100 nations concluded their world conference on mission and evangelism under the theme 'Your Kingdom Come'.

The two-week meeting was held in Melbourne, Australia, 12-25 May, and was sponsored by the World Council of Churches' (WCC) Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME).

During its deliberations this once-a-decade gathering of churches, Christian councils and mission agencies challenged any use of Christian mission as religious imperialism ideological colonialism, charitable benevolence or patient submission.

Lively debate about the tensions between rich and poor, politically or economically repressive regimes, and struggles for human rights enlivened the plenary sessions and section meetings on four topics: 'Good News to the Poor', 'The Kingdom of God and Human Struggles', 'The Church Witnesses to the Kingdom' and 'The Crucified Christ Challenges Human Power'.

In the keynote address, Dr. Philip Potter, general secretary of the WCC and native of Dominica, West Indies, told the participants: 'Our theme for this conference, "Your Kingdom Come" has been at the heart of the missionary movement throughout Christian history, and not least in this century.

'The place of mission in the life of the Church must be the central place, and none other. The theme of the Kingdom, affirmed in a context of prayer, has been dominant in all the world missionary conferences.'

In his opening address, CWME director Emilio Castro, a Uruguayan pastor, told the conference that 'the proclamation of the Gospel of the Kingdom includes an invitation to join the Kingdom, to participate in its struggles. Evangelism, then, becomes revolutionary engagement: repentance becomes a transformation of our practices, our faith, a commitment to the King'.

At the core of the conference work in the four sections was a significant number of people who are involved with the poor, politically oppressed groups, or culturally dominated peoples. Thus the sections on Good News to the Poor declared:

'The poor are already in mission to change their own situation. What is required from the churches is a missionary movement that supports what they have already begun, and that focuses on building evangelising and witnessing communities of the poor that will discover and live out expressions of faith among the masses of the poor and oppressed.

'The churches will need to surrender their attitudes of benevolence and charity by which they have condescended to the poor; in many cases this will mean a radical change in the institutional life of the missionary movement. The churches will also need to be ready to listen to the poor, so that they can hear the Gospel from the poor, as well as learn about the ways in which they have helped to make them poor.'

The telling of the story of God in Christ, the section on 'The Church Witnesses to the Kingdom' wrote, is an 'inescapable mandate for the whole Church'.

'The Church is called to be a community, a living, sharing fellowship. The sign of the Kingdom is evident where our churches are truly open to the poor, the despised, the handicapped for whom our modern societies have little care. Then a church becomes a witness to the Lord who rejoiced in the company of outcasts.'

The conference warned churches against uncritical alliances with either centrally planned economies or capitalist urban consumerist systems. Moreover, if 'social action becomes impatient activism supported by only vague ideals, worship may become a private indulgence with no active concern for others'.

If the Melbourne meeting included a wide variety of lay and ordained delegates, executives of church and ecumenical organizations, people working on urban and rural mission frontiers, and in a variety of expressions of the Church, it was also more widely ecumenical than previous world mission gatherings. Emilio Castro said: 'In the preparation for this conference, Roman Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants have worked together side by side . . . Because we are in a period of 'world mission' it is fitting that representatives of all aspects of the churches' life should come together to face their common missionary and evangelistic vocation'.

About 35 Orthodox from the several traditions represented in the WCC membership were present, as were an equal number of Roman Catholics. Paulist Fr. Tom Stransky, visiting professor of theology at Princeton Theological Seminary, USA, recalled that at

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the Mexico City world conference in 1963 he was one of two Roman Catholic observers. He believes 'that the agenda discussed here is not different from the mission agenda before the Roman Catholic Church.'

Worship was a daily expression of unity in diversity. The Orthodox representatives made a major contribution to the worship, offering several special services and the most popular of several songs and phrases written for the conference was provided by Professor Nicoli Zabolotski. The Russian member of the WCC staff composed a version of 'Your Kingdom Come' in a Byzantine mode.

The worship grew out of the resources and the experiences at the conference itself. A worship group co-ordinated each day's offering and included Brother Wolfgang, animator of worship for the French Taizé community, Pablo Sosa, director of music and liturgies at the Union Theological Seminary in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and was convened by Dr. William Adams, professor of liturgies at Vancouver School of Theology, Canada.

Another essential part of the meeting was daily Bible study. The 25 groups in four languages concentrated on the Lord's Prayer as it is recorded in the Gospel of Matthew. Prof. Krister Stendahl of Harvard (USA) Divinity School moderated the Bible study leaders' meetings and provided study notes for the conference. Not only did the study provide a significant undergirding for the work of the sections; it also provided a place where considerable personal interplay took place.

The Australian churches, limited in the number of people who could actually attend the sessions, took full advantage of the largest ecumenical gathering in their history. They planned a parallel conference on the theme for their own members and youth conference as well, making use of many of the delegates. An ecumenical service of worship celebrated the feast of the Ascension on 15 May, filled the Roman Catholic Cathedral of St. Patrick. Metropolitan Anthony read the scripture in Russian, His Eminence Diangienda Kuntima from Zaire in Lingla, and Bishop Anastasios Yannoulatos of Athens gave the homily.

More than 7,000 people crammed into Melbourne's Festival Hall on 18 May, for a celebration of faith organized by the Melbourne churches and the Australian Council of Churches. Philip Potter, who had been hospitalized earlier with a leg infection, attended the rally and in his sermon told the throng: 'Tonight we have celebrated the great mystery of being living members of the body of Christ, the foretaste of the Kingdom of God and his justice.'

The highlight of the involvement with the Australian on community came the weekend of 16-18 May, when almost 400 of the participants spread out across Australia to visit with ecumenical groups and churches. The Australian churches had undergone their own study on the conference theme and this was the culminating moment. The Conference members returned tired and hoarse but clearly exhilarated.

The world conference heard in several ways from members of the Aborigine community of Australia, the original inhabitants whose numbers have shrunk to 161,000 by census estimates (more by their own) as the Australian 'newcomers' have reached 14 million.

The conference passed a resolution on the aboriginal issue which said: 'Our encounter with the Aborigine people has brought to our attention the way in which the Aborigines have been robbed of their own land and spiritual heritage... denied any fair share in the fruits of the society constructed with their resources.'

It called upon the WCC to request that 'the International Commission of Jurists come to Australia report on the denigration of the rule of law'. It also urged the Australian churches to return some of the land and property to Aboriginal groups as a sign of their commitment to land rights and a stimulus to government action.

A covering letter was approved thanking the Australian Churches for their hospitality and explaining that the statement on aboriginal rights was done with full recognition that those making the statement had their own churches issues on which they also had to act.

In the face of upheaval in South Korea, several participants at the conference returned home and cable, signed by CWME moderator Dr. Soritua Nababan, general secretary of the Indonesian Council of Churches, and Emilio Castro, asked President Chun Doo-hwan 'to do your utmost to find a rapid peaceful solution to the present situation, providing freedom for all political prisoners and speeding the return to democratic constitution'.

The conference expressed deep solidarity with the suffering of the people of El Salvador and of all Latin America, with particular mention of the martyrdom of Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero. It asked that a letter be sent to President Jimmy Carter appealing the government of the United States of America to stop the support of military regimes and military aid to them 'and to respect the right of the people of Latin America to seek a new social order that is more just and human'.

Two resolutions on South Africa were passed by the conference. One noted the police violence against students protesting apartheid in education and another condemned the removal and denial of citizenship to more than two million black South Africans in the relocation of black Africans underway in South Africa. Millions more face the same fate. The WCC and national councils of churches were urged to focus attention on these issues and, among other things, to challenge the South African churches with their missionary responsibility to minister to the poor in situations of need and injustice.

Towards the end of the final session a resolution was passed with broad support which said, in part:

'We recognize, however, that there are other countries where foreign powers are intervening militarily and governments which oppress, exploit, imprison and kill innocent people. We may be able to identify some of those countries and peoples. Others however, we dare not identify for the simple reason that such specific public identification by the conference might endanger the position—even the lives—of many of our brothers and sisters, some of whom are participating in this conference. We therefore confess our inability to be as prophetic as we ought to be...'

An amendment, offered by Dr. Nazir Ali, Dean of the Anglican Theological School, Karachi, Pakistan, called on the conference to 'condemn the military intervention in Afghanistan . . . and the continuing violation of human rights in Afghanistan' . . . was defeated, after heated debate, by a vote of 66 to 58.

The conference heard special greetings from a number of delegates. Perhaps most dramatic was that from the Zimbabwe Christian Council. The President of Zimbabwe, Methodist minister Canaan Banana, was to have presented a paper to one of the sections. He could not come but did contribute a study paper.

The three Zimbabwean delegates brought greetings that were read to the conference by Mr. Gloria Gwata, general secretary of the YWCA of Zimbabwe. They expressed delight to be present as the 'first representatives sent out under the banner of the true name of our nation—Zimbabwe'.

They spoke on behalf of their churches that have suffered isolation and 'longed to identify themselves fully with their Christian brothers and sisters'.

Their 'hard-won victory' did not come only through their own determination. 'We were sustained and reinforced by the co-operation and support—material, moral and spiritual—accorded to us by the WCC and its member churches.'

They mentioned the great challenges facing Zimbabwe in the process of 'resettlement, reconstruction, rehabilitation and reconciliation'. Those in the Church 'are challenged to proclaim and practice the gospel according to its relevance to the total reality of the situation'.

The women at the conference, coming from the same variety of cultures as the whole body, presented a statement that affirmed the 'visibility of women (here) has a sign towards fuller community between men and women in the church in decision-making positions'.

But they noted that women were noticeably absent in documents on the history of mission at the meeting and 'we are equal with men only on paper but not in practice. Only one woman has given a presentation in plenary while addresses have been delivered by eight men'.

The conference passed several resolutions that called, among other things, for churches, communities and organizations to work towards a new community of men and women to help 'live the future of the Kingdom now'.

It also called for 'future conferences to be conducted in such a way that women are included in the modes of expression, in worship, in giving major theological presentations in plenary, in the use of language, images and forms of communication'.

The documents produced during two weeks of prayer and study, struggle and debate, learning and sharing will become part of mission history as they are used with churches and agencies around the world. But the consensus of the participants is that the most important ingredient in such a conference is what happens to those who are involved and how they personally communicate the experience. Fr. Stransky said that 'nowhere else can such a diverse group grapple with such fundamental issues of faith'.

Dr. Yap Kim Hao, general secretary of the Christian Conference of Asia with offices in Singapore, believes that the 'abiding message from Melbourne is that the Kingdom has special significance for the poor. The implication for the churches, many but not all of whom are poor, will be worked out in the coming years'.

The Melbourne meeting follows in a great tradition of mission conferences which began in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1910. From that grew the International Missionary Council established in 1921. A second missionary conference followed near Jerusalem in 1928.

Dr. Potter said in his keynote address that 'the World Council of Churches is proud to be the inheritor of the great missionary movement which launched the decisive stage of the ecumenical movement at Edinburgh 1910'.

After conferences in Tambaram India 1938, Whitby (England) in 1947, Willingen (FRG) in 1952 and Achimota (Ghana) in 1958, the IMC, which had been 'in association' with the WCC since its founding in 1948, came into full relationship in 1961 and is now called the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism. Other world conferences followed in Mexico City (1963) and Bangkok (1973).

Thus Melbourne 1980 stands in a 70-year tradition of wrestling with the meaning of mission and evangelism for those who believe that in Jesus Christ God changed human history.

As the message to the churches states: 'In the name of Jesus Christ we have come. Our attention focused on the prayer Jesus taught us: "Your Kingdom Come". This prayer disturbs us and comforts us, yet by it we are united.'

(Courtesy : EPS)

A Pastoral Letter to the United Reformed Church— U.K. From the CNI Member of the Council for World Mission Team which Visited the URC in April-May 1980

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ :

*My heartfelt of thanksgiving to God for the enriching fellowship we enjoyed together in
your company, may I share your thoughts with you.*

1. Oneness in the Lord

'Is Christ divided?' is the constantly repeated question that stings our Christian conscience in our country here. But it was no less the same when I visited you as a fellow-labourer in the Vineyard of the Lord. When I read through the basis of your Union and the manual my pain increased, for, in it, you have advocated acceleration of union with all 'speed'. That word 'speed' sent an arrow into my divided witness and I have come back to my homeland with the poignant arrow sticking in my bosom. My visit to you has convicted me and my people of the sin of division and the discomfiture of divided witness. Is it God alone? Is it man alone? Who should accomplish this unity? Without God man cannot; without man God will not and therefore we have to press both here in India and there in U. K. our fragile hands clinging to the nail-pierced hands of grace.

2. Renewal in, with and through the Holy Spirit

Cardinal Saleige exclaimed about Vatican II : 'The wretched theologians they have forgotten two things : The Holy Spirit and the laymen'. These words kept ringing in my ears while I was sharing experience with you and listening to your debate and participating in your worship. Your significant emphasis on the renewing power of the Holy Spirit in each place and in the total fellowship made me wonder whether our theocentric and Christocentric worship should equally be pneumocentric worship which should not shy away from Charismatic groups and look down upon them as sectarian fanatics but draw inspiration from their existential and full blooded communion with each other and with God, the Father, and God, the Son through what, Taylor calls 'The Go-Between God', the Holy Spirit. The early missionaries, including the most stalwart of them, lived in mighty dread of syncretism because of the mysticism of the East and seldom taught adequately on the Holy Spirit and the mysticism of John's Gospel and St. Paul's letters, so that the Pentecostals found it opportune to fill the gap and meet the lack. Our under-emphasis and their over-emphasis unfortunately have only added to the already dwelling fragmentary denominationalism. It is sad that I found even larger numbers of such splintering groups mostly centered round the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit cannot be grasped by us but must be grasped by him. But again he will not storm the citadel of the human heart. He will know but will not enter unless the door opens. He is our enabling God who makes it possible for us to make it possible for Him to admit us into His World of transfiguration and Holy Communion.

Please listen to what Rev. John R. Garden of the Trinity College Chapel, Royal Parade, Parkville Australia says :

'The Charismatic movement protests against large bureaucratic churches in which professional clergy have taken the power of Christ's life out of the heart of the people he came to save. This movement of renewal in the churches seeks to "free up" ecclesiastical structures which imprison God's people and recognise the reality of God's promise to pour out His Spirit on all people, not just the experts. To this extent we should all rejoice and lay ourselves open to the Spirit's moving'.

3. 'The Forgotten Man'—'The Frozen Asset'

'The Voice of the Laity' is one of the latest bulletins that was waiting for my return on my desk. The lay leadership are turning restive hear at the clericalism which they fear is disregarding the lay ministry. If the laity is the ministering centre of any church and if the church believes in the total ministry of its people together, then the lay people would say to its ordained leadership 'Your priesthood is a ministry'. All our life and work, spring from our innermost being only at the level of spirituality and the clergy and the lay have to be mutually equipped each other for spirituality and guiding each other in secular participation through worship and diaconia. The time has arrived within India and in U.K. where the Church should re-examine its structures and whether we are unduly over-emphasising ordination and masculine theology. Today the Church in India and U.K. is like a bus with the Pastor as driver, Treasurer as Conductor collecting fares and the lay people as passive passengers being driven to heaven. It should become like a football team with a captain and players each fully and actively involved in playing the game as a Community in vigorous action.

Let me quote for our mutual edification from a recent Indian publication: 'Ecumenism in India'.

'The real tragedy of Christian witness, however, is self-righteousness and the Pharisaic parade of 'I am saved'; 'Are you saved?' stance, but when the ecumenical tongues of flame envelope a person, his self-conceit breaks to pieces against the onslaught of the Publican conviction: 'Forgive me a sinner'. The tenets, the creeds, the liturgy, the mitre, the cope, the cassock, the candle, the stole, the font, the altar—all crumble when the prophetic denunciation of Amos resounds through the corridors of man-made order consuming and burnishing and refurbishing man-made order vis-a-vis the God-given faith of the body and blood of Jesus Christ'.

4. Kingdom Does not rest on numbers but on the King

Numerical growth was not the concern of Jesus or his disciples. Bishop Newbigin comments:—

'There can surely be no doubt that anyone who knows Jesus as Lord and Saviour will rejoice when men come to know him and will grieve when he is ignored or rejected. In the Acts of the Apostles, we find a lively interest in numerical growth. The rest of the New Testament furnishes little evidence of interest in numerical growth. In the Synoptic Gospels Jesus does not give the impression of being interested in large numbers. The emphasis falls upon the faithfulness of the disciples rather than upon their number.

Neither does a study of the Epistles seem to disclose any interest in numerical growth. We do not find Paul concerning himself with the size of the churches, or with questions about their growth. His primary concern is with their faithfulness, with the integrity of their witness. There is a deep concern for the integrity of the Christian witness, but there is no evidence of anxiety about or enthusiasm for rapid numerical growth. In no sense does the triumph of God's reign seem to depend upon the growth of the church.

In the Johannine Gospel and letters there is a persistent concern about the world. But there is nowhere any suggestion that the salvation of the world depends upon the growth of the Church'. (The Open Secret.)

And so it would seem there is no justification for our anxiety over numbers. We are not to be mere transmitting stations with a crusade complex to swell statistics. Proclamation is an integral communication of good news exemplified in word, deed and life. Evangelism has to bridge two gaps—

1. The gap between the Church and the World and
2. The gap between the clergy and the lay, and together they should become one Community, living in one Holy Communion.

Ultimately the ecumenical communion should burst its bounds and transcend man-made orders and lead from unity of churches to unity of mankind.

In conclusion, may I say that your problems are our problems and our problems are yours. We are all alike not only because we are flesh and blood but because we are disciples of Christ, which discipleship, has been traded to us through traditions and denomi-

nations, which still keep us disunited and weak. Let us repent and seek God's forgiveness and wait for His Power to descend on us and abide in us and lead us forward in obedience to His call.

Mission is one. Mission is local. It is a regional, national, and international. Mission is spiritual. It is also social, economic and political. It is integral to save the body, mind and spirit,—all men and all of man. URC and CNI are one in this mission and both are members of CWM for this very purpose. It is God's mission, not the Church's nor ours. Farewell, brothers and sisters, who can separate us from the love of Christ?

Yours in the living Lord,

A. C. DHARMARAJ

General Secretary,
Church of North India.

Southern Asia—(Continued from page 2)

Bishop Jack Dane gave the addresses on 'Administration and Management'. He took Nehemiah as his model for an able administrator who had a real concern for the welfare of his people. He was strictly impartial and constantly raised the morale of his people 'from the magnitude of their problems to the greatness of their God'.

Bishop David Gitari, the young Bishop from Kenya, gave devotional addresses and led the concluding prayers each day. Among the many wise and valuable things he shared was his own experience as a shepherd on the slopes of Mount Kenya during his boyhood. He spoke of how it was necessary for the shepherd to be vigilant and ready to move among flock. Sometimes leading them sometimes goading the sheep who are slow or need special attention.

The Finance Secretary of the C.N.I. also gave valuable advice on 'Financial Management' and the Revd. Dr. Salim Shariff gave a thought provoking talk on 'Personnel Management-Counselling'.

Each day in the afternoon the Bishops shared with each other the special local situation prevailing in their dioceses. This was a real time of sharing of their involvement in ecumenical mission and local evangelical efforts. Some Bishops spoke about the problems caused by divisive influences in their areas while others shared their concern for the rural poor.

'At the end of the Retreat cum Conference the attending Bishops were unanimous in their affirmation that this occasion of their coming together had been a unique opportunity which they had benefited greatly. They were truly thankful to the organisers for making it possible for them to come together. It was suggested that local resources could be found for them to meet in each others' areas at least once in three years. The assembled Bishops had a special word of thanks for Bishop Jack Dane of Sydney, the Rev. A. C. Lal and the staff of the Cathedral and especially the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association for making the unique gathering of the Bishops from Southern Asia possible.

—Courtesy: North India Churchman

BOOK REVIEW

A Hundred Years in Bengal: A History of the Oxford Mission, 1880-1980—By two of the Brethren of the Epiphany I.S.P.C.K., Delhi, 1979, 160 pages, Rs. 12, \$ 6-50.

The fact that it is so soon after the former Cambridge Mission to Delhi celebrated its centenary that the Oxford Mission also keeps its corresponding festival is a commentary on the interest which the Church of England had in the work of the Church in India at that time. Also it reflects the strong movement in the Church of England in the latter half of the 19th century towards a revival of Religious Communities in the Anglican fold.

The modest book under review consists of 150 pages of narrative with some photographs. The first part, comprising 63 pages, takes the story up to the 1930's and this is the work of one of the members of the Community based on earlier records.

The second section is introduced by the following self-explanatory paragraph.

'In the first 50 years it has been possible to write what may be called a history of the Mission, but the nearer the events are to the present the more difficult the writing of history becomes. This is particularly so when the writer finds himself narrating events in which he himself took part, and speaking about people whom he knew. So in the account of these later years history will be mixed with reminiscence. This may add interest to the narrative; later generations will have to decide how far our judgments have been correct. In order to keep a better balance two of us have co-operated in this part. We speak largely as

eye witnesses, and where convenient we have written in the first person of events as we saw them.'

In one sense your reviewer is not the best person to evaluate this volume, because he himself has been increasingly closely associated with the Oxford Mission since he first made their acquaintances in 1922. On the other hand, it does enable him to say that this is a faithful and competent record of the work of the Brethren and Sisters of the Epiphany, who have made an incalculable contribution to the life of the whole Church in Eastern India. It is a book which should be in the hands of at least all leaders of the C.N.I. and could be read with profit by every member.

Yet I would not be speaking the whole truth if I did not say that, to my mind the narrative (especially in the second part) is too compressed, and so fails to fire the imagination of the reader. Perhaps it could have been better written by someone outside the Community who could speak frankly of his admiration for the work and specially of the self-denying, not to say saintly, lives of its members.

It is sad to have to report that the recent murder of Fr. Rigby at Barisal, the third member of the Brotherhood to lose his life there under similar circumstances, has placed the future of the Oxford Mission in Bangladesh in jeopardy. Indeed with the ban on getting recruits from abroad, the slow progress in indigenous vocation makes the whole future of this wonderful Community uncertain. In proportion to our gratitude for all that have done for the Church in India we should all be praying for God's guidance and blessings for their future.

R. W. BRYAN.

(Courtesy: North India Churchman)

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News from the Dioceses

WORKSHOP ON CHRISTIAN ART AND SOCIAL ISSUES

From 5-9 June, 1980, Gurukul Lutheran Theological College and Research Institute, Madras, gathered together twenty artists for a Workshop on Christian Art and Social Issues. Such workshops for Christian Artists have been an annual feature of Gurukul's programme since 1977. The artists discussed the role of the artists in society and studied the Bible on social issues. The main concentration of the workshop was on actually painting social themes from a Christian perspective.

Of special note, however, was the formation of an Association of Indian Christian Art at the conclusion of the workshop. The purpose of the Association is to encourage the production of the art reflecting Christian concerns in India. The Association is to be related to the newly established Association of Christian Art begun last year in Japan by the CCA.

The workshop participants appointed regional Contact Persons and Core Committee with Mr. Jyoti Sahi as pro-tem Secretary. They decided to leave the Association as an unregistered society for the time being, but they set nine projects for the next few years. These projects include the starting of a quarterly newsletter, looking into the possibility of an Ashram for Christian Art, promoting galleries of Christian art (such as that planned at Gurukul), serving as a liaison between church needs and artists, sponsoring summer camps for young artists and workshops for professional artists, seeking funds to appoint three full-time workers to promote the Association's projects, and running annual workshops to produce Christmas cards, calendars, etc. for the self-support of the Association.

Anyone interested in supporting the objects of the Association is invited to join, paying an annual subscription fee of Rs. 5. Professional artist will be invited to join as Associates in the Association. The Association looks forward to the full co-operation of all the churches and Christian agencies so that they can develop and use their talents in the service of God's mission in India.

HERBERT HOEFER

MINORITY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS—DISMISSAL OF TEACHERS

The Supreme Court has upheld the right of minority educational institutions to administer their schools and colleges without outside interference, especially in the matter of appointment and dismissal of teachers. On February 4th it declared invalid certain provisions of the Pradesh Private Educational Institutions Control Act. It its application to schools run by minority Communities. The provisions, struck down, stated among other things that no teacher shall be dismissed

except with prior approval of the competent authority, which should be satisfied that there are 'adequate and reasonable grounds' for such action. A number of Christian institutions challenged these rules, arguing that they will deprive them of their fundamental right to administer their schools and colleges by vesting ultimate administrative control in an outside authority.

Chief Justice V. V. Chandrachud, Justice Murtaza Fazal Ali and Justice Kailasam in their separate judgments held the majority view that the controversial provisions could not be applicable to minority institutions. The Chief Justice stated that the provisions give unqualified mandate that no teacher shall be dismissed except with prior approval by the competent authority. These rules confer upon the competent authority in the absence of proper rules, a wide and untrammelled discretion to interfere in the management's actions on grounds which do not appear to it either adequate or reasonable.' 'The conferment of such power on an outside authority, the exercise of which is made depend on purely subjective considerations, cannot but constitute an infringement of the right guaranteed by the Constitution to minority institutions.'

The Supreme Court also held invalid another rule that any dismissed teacher may appeal against the order to such authority or officer as may be prescribed. Chief Justice Chandrachud said that this provision was so broadly worded that it conferred on the government power to choose the officer regardless of his standing status.

—N.C.C.I.R.

DIOCESE OF TIRUNELVELI

Inauguration of Men's Fellowship

This year (1980) is the Bicentenary year of the Tirunelveli church. July 6-13 will be the great festival days. Already great things are happening in our church.

The long-felt need for Men's fellowship was realized in this Bicentenary year. Bishop Daniel Abraham the architect of this Fellowship, inaugurated it on 17th May 1980 at Palayamkotai. The Bishop reminded us of the words of Bishop Jebaraj, uttered in 1953. 'God has given us two wings. One wing is the Women's Fellowship. The other wing is the Men's Fellowship. If the bird of Tirunelveli church is to rise and fly, both these wings must work simultaneously. But Men's "wing" is not functioning well. How can the Tirunelveli church fly upward?' The dream of Men's Fellowship has come true in this Bicentenary year. About 200 branches were affiliated with the Men's Fellowship of the Diocese on that day.

The Rev. Theodore Williams preached an inspiring message on the texts 1 John 1: 1-7 and 1 Cor. 1: 9, at the Holy communion service which preceded the inauguration.

The aims of the Fellowship were explained. Prayer fellowship, witness and service—(Acts 2:42). Office-bearers of the fellowship were appointed on that day.

‘Do not despise this small beginning, for the eyes of the Lord rejoice to see the work begin.....’ (Zech. 4:10—The Living Bible).

R. JOSEPH

MADRAS DIOCESE

Easter Conference—Sholinghur, Pallipat and Nagari Pastorates

This year about 250 children from the boarding homes in these three pastorates joined together in 2 centres for special studies during Easter. From Nagari, the elementary boys went to Kollagunta and the high school ones to Sholinghur. Unfortunately, as the Andhra 10th std. exams were in progress the boys of that class had to miss out.

Apart from attending the local church services on Good Friday and Easter Sunday, special services were arranged to open and close the conferences. In Sholinghur, the conference began with a time of meditation based on pictures which had been prepared by the warden for the conference in Nagari last year. In Kollagunta, instead of these stylised pictures a series of large, coloured wall pictures were used and different groups of children did dramatic readings from the gospel story to go with each picture.

Following the service, a talk well illustrated with maps and charts, was given on the political, religious and social life in Palestine at the time of Jesus. This gave the necessary background against which the story of the passion could be seen in perspective.

For other sessions the members were divided into groups of 10-12. The junior groups, through dramatic readings, were given an overall glimpse of the main events in the life of Jesus from the time in the Garden of Gethsemane to Easter morning. With the aim to see them as people of feelings and actions just like us today, children looked at some of the main people involved in the story, to sum up their study they prepared cardboard dolls to represent these people arranged them around the central figure of Jesus.

The senior groups, according to their age, did a detailed study of one of the three persons—Judas, Pilate, Peter. By hunting up Bible references the groups discovered for themselves what their ‘character’ had done. Then they went on to discuss why they may have acted in this way and how they may have felt about what they did to Jesus. Each group summarised their findings and thoughts by preparing a pictorial chart and an imaginary interview by the radio commentator with the person they had studied.

Light relief was provided on Saturday afternoon by games and sports and early on Sunday morning every one had the chance to exercise their voices as they went through the streets singing resurrection songs and distributing tracts.

The conferences closed with a candle lighting service. A central light was lit to symbolise the resurrection of Jesus. From this the leaders lit their candles and took the light of Christ back to their groups. Previously, each person had written on a slip of paper what he/she felt was the thing in his/her life for which Jesus had died. Then to symbolise the power of the risen Christ over sin, each person burnt the slip of paper in the candle flame, and dedicated themselves to His service.

Conferences based on small groups meant that a large number of leaders was necessary and our thanks go to the wardens and all the local teachers who were prepared to give up their Easter holidays to be with the children. They were helped by the Presbyters, the Youth Director, the Director of Hostels, the KNH Home Officer and Diocesan Women worker. Behind the scenes there were many to prepare the food and keep the members content. To all of these folk, who are too many to mention by name, go thanks for their part in making the conferences an experience of the living Christ to all who attended.

BETH WALTON

MADRAS DIOCESE

Home for the Aged

On the 5th of April 1980, Easter eve, the elders of the C.S.I. Malayalam Congregation, Holy Trinity Church, Ritherdon Road, paid a visit to the home for the Aged. They hosted a nice lunch to the residents of the Home and entertained the members of Anbaham with songs and speeches. They also had brought gifts for the residents. A Malayalam poem composed in honour of that occasion was read. Below we give a free translation in English. We would request many such groups to visit Anbaham and cheer up the residents.

In a peaceful place in the city of Madras
The village of Adayar comes into limelight
And a refuge and a home for the Aged
Came into existence in a wonderful way
Praise the Lord—Praise the Lord—
We thank you Lord for all the comforts—
As days go by, April 5th arrived
And the elders of the C.S.I.
Malayalam Congregation Came
Over to see the inmates greet and wish them well
All, bow before Our Lord and Master
Remembering that all are ONE in Christ.
We are sailing in the same boat
And we pray that our Master
Bring us safe to the beautiful
Shore when the time Comes.

—Convent

OBITUARY

The Rt. Rev. Thomas Garrette, former Bishop of Tirunelveli passed away at Hallton in England on the 10th of April, 1980. A writer, a forthright and committed servant of the Lord and a scrupulous leader of the Church of South India with unswerving principles, he was the shepherd whom his sheep looked up for guidance and solace. His contribution to Christian literature, especially in the sphere of worship, is noteworthy. He was also an inspiring teacher of English literature whose youth could afford it and when his spirit was young. Of the significance of his contribution to the Church and Church administration there can be no exaggeration. He was one to whom personal comfort, and personal prestige were the rungs which would always trample under so that he could look up the ladder of spiritual living into the divine wisdom of things. In his death the Church has lost one of the last of the race that stood for an age and a half.

'Human Relations-Workshop on Styles of Leadership'

Apostolate of the Laity Department

A two-day 'Human relations workshop on Styles of Leadership' was held at Noyes English School, Madurai on 8th and 9th March, 1980. The Workshop was organised by the Education Unit of Apostolate of the Laity Department, Diocese of Madura and Ramnad. Nineteen Correspondents, Medical Superintendents, Headmasters and Headmistresses from fourteen institutions took part in the workshop.

The objective of the workshop was to bring about better relationship between the Heads of institutions and those who work under them. The workshop was oriented towards modern concepts and Christian dimensions of 'technology of behaviour'.

The Rt. Rev. Dr. D. Pothirajulu, Bishop of Madura and Ramnad in his devotional message on the first day of the workshop explained the multi-dimensional aspects of human relationship and leadership. The Bishop emphasised the need for concern and respect for the human personality as distinct from inanimate objects and animals. The Bishop based his devotion on the Scripture portion taken from St. Luke Chapter 15.

The resource person Mr. Charles Norman, Senior Manager, Training and Development, B.H.E.L. Tiruchirapalli, explained in a lucid manner the problems in the area of human relations and styles of leadership and suggested workable and useful solutions. His talk were supplemented by film-strips, dialogues and discussions. The participants enjoyed the fellowship and were immensely benefited by the workshop. The workshop on Human relations and Styles of leadership was a very useful and purposeful one.

The Rt. Rev. Dr. D. POTHIRAJULU,
Bishop and Convener—A.L.D.

J. E. M. ARPUTHAMURTHY,
Head-Education Unit, ALD.

**Prayer used by the Sisters of the
Church of South India for the renewal of the Church**

Father, You promised to make a new covenant with your people,

to give them a new heart, a new spirit,
to make all things new.

Thank you that Jesus Christ is the fulfilment of your promises.

Thank you for the new covenant in His blood,
for the new wine of His gospel,
for new creation in Him.

Forgive us that we so often reject this gift of newness and choose the old ways of selfishness and sin.

Give us grace today and every day by your Spirit to put away the old life and put on the new.

Here we present ourselves to you that we may be transformed by the renewing of our minds. So make us by your power into your renewed people,
bound to you in faith and obedience,
to our fellow Christians in hearty love,
and to the world in witness and service.

In the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord we pray,

Amen.

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Training Centre for Women starts again from October, 1980.

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For other particulars and Application Form kindly contact the Director.

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The EFICOR Educational and Training Unit offers a four-month course to equip men and women to be agents of change in their church and Community. The course begins from the first week of September 1980.

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- (a) Biblical understanding of justice and development.
- (b) Political, social and psychological factors of underdevelopment.
- (c) Community organisation and Non-formal education.
- (d) Community health.
- (e) Practical training in project planning and evaluation, agriculture, animal husbandry, crafts, etc.

Eligibility :

Applicants must be committee Christians, graduates from theological or secular colleges—who are convinced of God's call to serve him as community workers with under-privileged people.

APPLY ON OR BEFORE THE 10TH AUGUST 1980. APPLICANTS MUST PROCURE A FORM FROM THE TRAINING ASSISTANT, EFICOR Educational and Training Unit, 16/1, Dhili Narayana Layout, Banaswadi Road, Maruthisevanagar, Bangalore-560 033.

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Great Christian: Commemorated By the Indian Church by the Rt. Revd. R. W. Bryan	Rs. 7.00	\$ 1.00
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In this monograph the main concern has been shown, by using macro-semantic analysis, toward that horizon whereby, through the process of conscientisation, people will become aware of such structures which are oppressive and victim-producing. Elimination of such structures is not possible unless there is a deep awareness of the 'sources' of oppression. The book is a must for all those who are deeply concerned with such live issues.			
Unfolding the Ideal Life by Herbert C. Long	Rs. 45.00	\$ 9.00
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Lakhdasa De Mel—God's Servant—World Citizen—Lanka's Son by Mrs. John De Mel	Rs. 25.00	\$ 2.25
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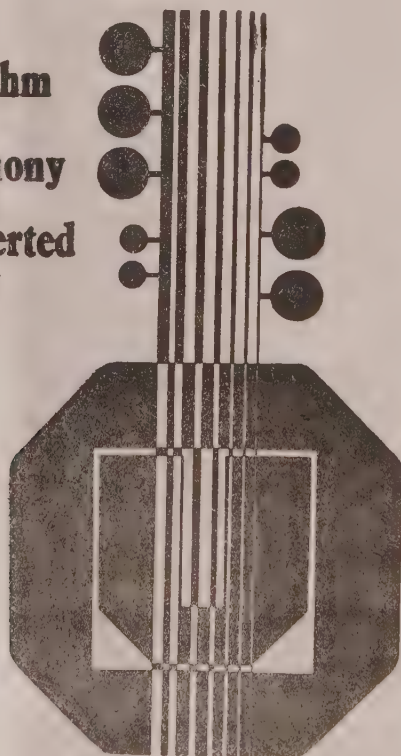
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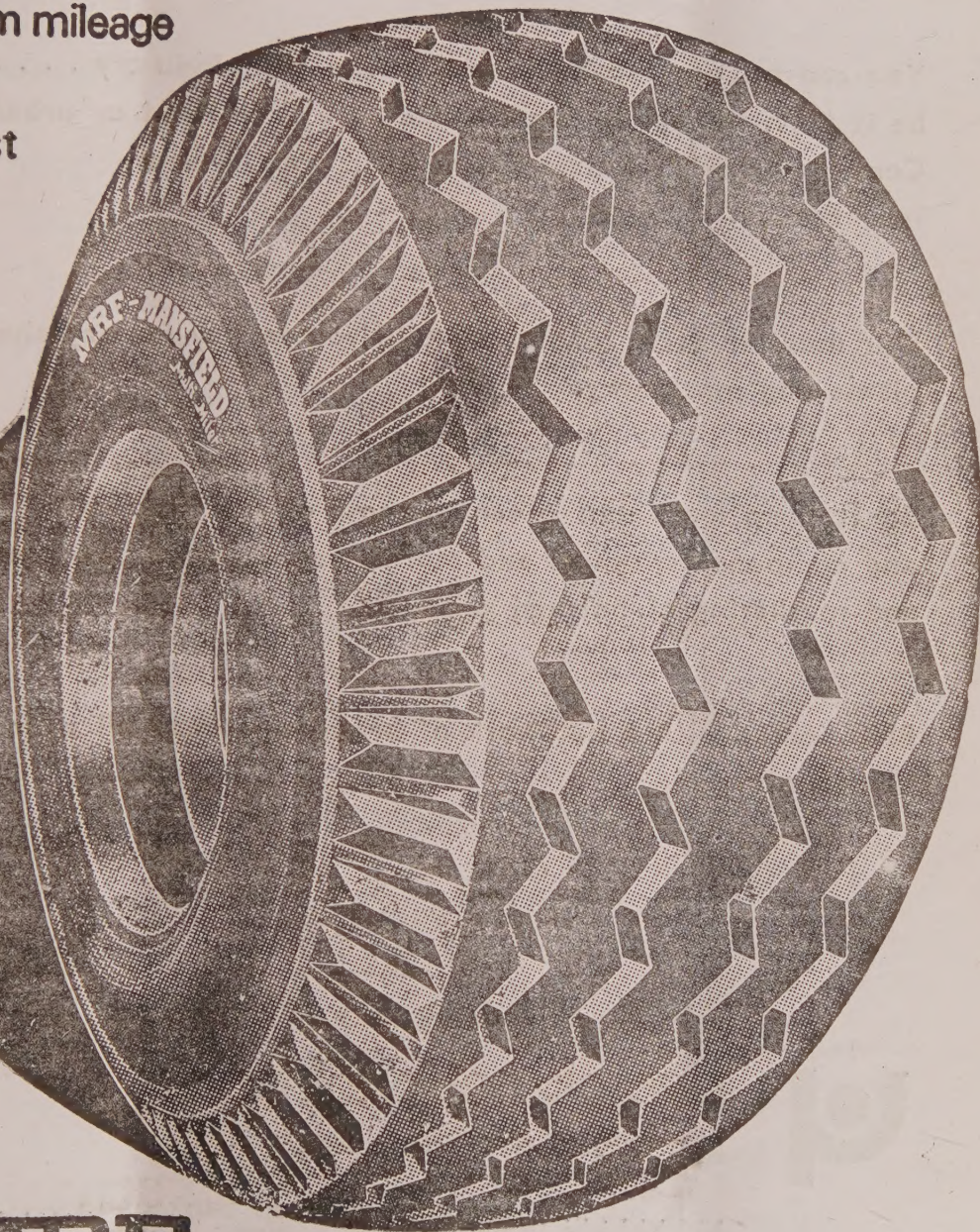
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